



Back to normal living

1967 Annual Report

**Metropolitan
Society for the
Blind**



Judge Ira G. Kaufman (seated) President, Board of Trustees, Metropolitan Society for the Blind, and McAllister Upshaw, Executive Director.

Presidential Report

This past year was one of increased service and accomplishment for the Metropolitan Society for the Blind.

Significant gains were made in several areas in 1967 as the Metropolitan Society for the Blind exerted new and positive influences in the areas of employment, education and attitudes toward blindness within the community.

Again this year, inter-agency cooperation reached a new high. The range of agencies and organizations that consult the Metropolitan Society never fails to impress me. The list goes from A to Z.

As usual, MSB has maintained a close working relationship with the Detroit League for the Handicapped, Michigan Division of Services for the Blind, Rehabilitation Institute and other closely related agencies.

Director's Foreword

The total community benefits when disabled citizens are restored to normal living.

A year's service to Detroit is summarized in these too few pages. The Metropolitan Society for the Blind is engaged to its limits in several major service areas. One is chosen to be featured in each Annual Report. This year, it is SOCIAL SERVICES.

Each specialized social service agency is expected to deal with a certain kind of trouble. MSB's special problems are those associated with blindness. The citizen with this kind of trouble has the right to expect understanding from the agency—understanding and maximum effort to help him make the best use he can of all resources designated for

1967 also saw the inauguration of close cooperation between MSB and the Detroit Society for the Prevention of Blindness.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many volunteers, the officers of the Metropolitan Society for the Blind, the Board of Trustees, and the Members of the Society, all of whom have contributed their time and energy so unselfishly.

Lastly, I would like to thank the staff of the Metropolitan Society for the work they are doing. The community owes them a true debt of gratitude.

Judge Ira Kaufman
President, Board of Trustees

solution of problems which interfere with his normal living.

The blind person's first contact in the agency is with a social worker. It is a vital point; for out of the ensuing process grows the agency's meaning to him and to the community.

The social worker must comprehend the client's unique needs; must help him understand how his values influence his choices and his use of resources.

In this annual report, statistics tell their important story, but they do not breathe. It was staff collaboration that developed the social service picture animated with the vitality of daily practice.

McAllister Upshaw
Executive Director

Summary of Service Year

Information and Referral

There are many services in the community that can be helpful to blind persons. One of the Metropolitan Society's most important functions is directing blind people to the appropriate service or agency. It might be Family Service, Planned Parenthood, Visiting Nurses or any of dozens of organizations.

Last year 108 referrals were made to other agencies and 308 persons were referred within MSB for service.

The Metropolitan Society for the Blind receives many requests for information relating to blindness, most of them by phone. Last year 1456 of these requests for information were processed and answered.

Social Service

Last year 182 people requested help for the first time from the Metropolitan Society for the Blind. Each was interviewed, a medical history and eye report obtained, and a comprehensive plan developed with him.

MSB social workers made over 200 home visits in 1967.

Consultation

As the Metropolitan Society becomes better known in the community, other agencies refer to it in ever increasing numbers for information and consultation.

Some problems are specific to blindness and MSB has specialists in principal areas. In 1966, 842 consultations with professional persons in other agencies expedited services for blind people. In 1967, the figure rose to 1241.



This is a scene from "The Blind Who Can See," MSB's new color slide program. It is now being shown to interested groups and organizations in the Detroit area.

Social Service

When someone becomes blind many problems develop. Often, there is a feeling of total helplessness and dependency. At times the individual may wish he were dead. He desperately needs someone to identify with, to confide in, to understand and help solve his problems.

In most situations a trained social worker is the best professional person to have the initial contact with a blind person and with those close to him, such as parents, spouse, or other family members. The advantage of this is that a social worker can go beyond the immediate or presenting problems and start the person on the road to rehabilitation and independence at an early stage.

The social worker is particularly concerned with helping blind persons, both singly and in groups, to work and live in ways that build a sense of individual dignity and social responsibility, and to obtain a better understanding of the facts and anxieties related to his blindness.

The social worker at the Metropolitan Society knows that persons who are blind are more similar to, than different from those who are sighted despite popular misconceptions. He recognizes that blindness is a part of the personality, not the total person. In short, we are working with a person who is blind, not a blind person.

The core of the social worker's interest is the person, not his blindness and the potentialities of the individual are more important than the problems of blindness.

To this end, the social worker tries to develop the client to his full potential.

When a blind person calls the Metropolitan Society for the first time an appointment is made for a personal interview. This takes place either in the home or at MSB's offices.

At this interview, various services offered in the community are discussed along with the blind person's interests, problems, desires, anxieties, goals, etc.

A medical and eye report is obtained by MSB for evaluation. This is important for several reasons. There may be health factors that determine services needed

or activities that should be avoided. Frequently, people with partial vision are referred to the low vision clinic.

At this interview or at subsequent meetings the blind person decides in collaboration with the social worker what help is needed. The social worker knows that every blind person has his own unique problems and no two can be treated alike. For one man simply shoveling snow or mowing the grass again would restore his feeling of independence. For another it was the



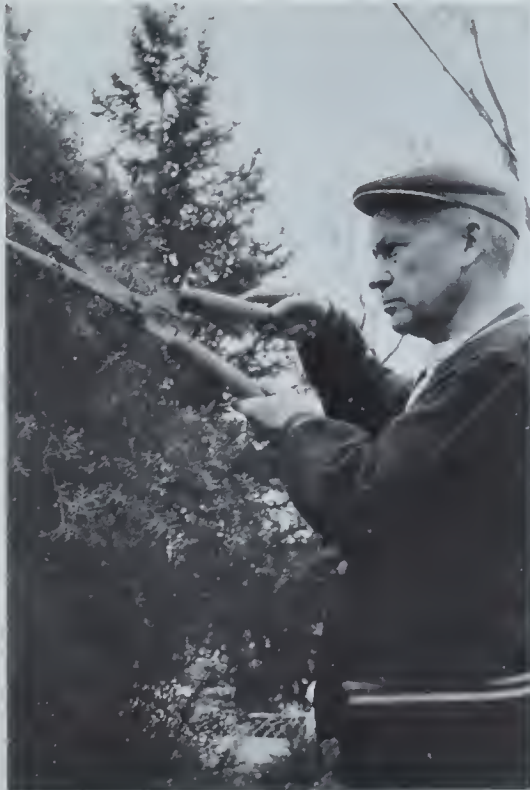
desire to get back on the job. A housewife wants to be able to clean house and cook again.

Metropolitan Society social workers know where teaching and rehabilitation services are available and refer clients to them.

It may be the Rehabilitation Institute for homemaking skills, the Detroit League for the Handicapped for vocational training or a MSB rehabilitation teacher for teaching activities of daily living.

The social worker's responsibility does not end here however. Social casework is a continuing service. The client's needs may change and therefore his rehabilitation program may have to take a new direction. The social worker is always available for consultation with the blind person, his family or the agency serving him.

The social service department at the Metropolitan Society is also available for consultation with other agencies, organizations or professional people in the community regarding problems specific to blindness.



1. The blind person decides in collaboration with the social worker what help is needed.
2. Shrubs still need trimming, even though the homeowner is blind. Many common yard chores can be done by blind people.
3. Just because a person is blind doesn't mean he can't participate in family or community activities.

Specialized Services

Rehabilitation Teaching

Rehabilitation teaching involves individual work with blind people either in their home or at MSB's offices. The teachers help blind adults master tasks that were once routine but which become difficult because of visual loss.

The continuation of the Katherine Tuck grant enabled MSB to continue rehabilitation teaching, a service begun in 1963.

The rehabilitation teacher is prepared to teach the blind person a variety of skills depending on the needs and goals of each individual. These skills include:

Activities of Daily Living—Personal grooming, techniques for cleaning house, doing the shopping, caring for children, laundry, ironing, cooking, eating, money identification, record keeping, arts and crafts projects.

Communication Skills—Reading and writing Braille, typing, handwriting, signing checks, writing letters, dialing the telephone, using Talking Book Machines.

Orientation and Mobility—Techniques for safe movement around the house; learning to rely on auditory and other sensory clues; proper use of the white cane for outdoor travel.

Obviously, mastery of these skills doesn't constitute complete personal adjustment to blindness. But, it often means the difference between accepting defeat and assuming personal responsibility.

Goals of Rehabilitation Teaching

To help the newly blinded adult accept the limitations his blindness imposes and adjust his way of living accordingly.

To teach new techniques and skills which make daily living easier.

To help in the selection and instruction in the use of various aids and appliances which will make certain tasks easier.

To assist in the future plans of the blind person and make available to him information sources and other agencies which may be needed to complete these plans.

To help the blind person become an integral part of the community's social resources along with his sighted neighbors.

To motivate the blind person to attain the highest limits of his abilities and desires.

To help the blind person become independent with confidence in his own abilities and his future.

To help the blind person return to the level of community living that is normal for him and to become a responsible, contributing member of society.

If you would like to learn more about rehabilitation teaching call the Metropolitan Society for the new brochure.

Communication Services

One of the specialized services for the blind that has been developed and coordinated by the Metropolitan Society is communication services.

Whether a blind person should learn Braille depends upon his responsibilities and interests. Many people, particularly the elderly, can manage very well without Braille. For children Braille is a must, and since instruction is provided in the schools, their needs present no problem.

Use of Braille may be an essential skill for those who become blind in their adult years. For some, the desire to learn Braille may come after they have developed other skills and have begun to accept their blindness.

Many needs for embossed reading material, principally textbooks for school children are met by volunteer organizations within the community.

Tri-County Braille Volunteers, a federation of Braille groups, is an affiliate of MSB. Several other volunteer groups that Braille and tape material are active in the Tri-County area and the Metropolitan Society maintains a close relationship with them.

MSB also cooperates with the Wayne County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

Low Vision Education

Over 75% of the people who come to the Metropolitan Society have partial vision. After evaluation many of these "legally blind" persons are referred to the low vision clinic for service.

It has been demonstrated that more than 80% of these people obtain a useful increase in visual acuity through the use of optical aids. Most aids are not used all the time, just to help in doing a particular task like sewing or reading.

MSB, in cooperation with the low vision clinic, has recently expanded its low vision education program. The purpose is to tell the community about this service and to promote its use on a wider scale.

Public Education

MSB's public education program was expanded again in 1967 with the employment of a full time public education counselor.

A 15 minute slide presentation "The Blind Who Can See" was produced and viewed by over 600 people.

It tells the interesting story of three partially sighted people who were helped by low vision aids. These "legally blind"

persons found that the local low vision clinic offered them the chance to do many things they previously thought impossible.

The presentation also provides a fascinating glimpse of the background and history of optical aids.

The Metropolitan Society's radio and TV spot program was also expanded and results have been encouraging.

Several brochures explaining agency services were published which complement our public education library.

In addition this department worked closely with other agencies and staff members to coordinate related public education activities.

Group Work Consultation encourages the use by blind persons of the available social resources in the community.

Last summer, a dozen blind senior citizens attended a camp experience with sighted citizens in their community. This activity was coordinated by MSB's Group Work Consultant.

During 1967 a program was developed with the cooperation of the Detroit Department of Parks and Recreation and the United Auto Workers that enables older blind persons to participate in active senior citizens groups with their sighted neighbors. The program called "Project Restore" gets underway early in 1968. Leisure time activity is important to all citizens and Project Restore promises a rewarding social experience to those who participate.

State and National

Metropolitan Society staff members are active in many organizations relating to their specialties.

Several professional papers were presented by staff members at national conventions and later published in professional journals.

As always, close collaboration was sustained between the Metropolitan Society for the Blind and national organizations relating to blindness.

Vocational Training and Employment Consultation

In 1967 many ideas and proposed programs became realities.

- ▲ April saw The Metropolitan Society create and co-sponsor the first Careers Unlimited program for visually handicapped students. Over three hundred people attended this day-long program.
- ▲ As a part of career guidance two career seminars were held featuring guest speakers who explained opportunities in their fields.
- ▲ The Vocational Information Center was established in 1967. This center provides complete occupation information in several hundred vocational areas.
- ▲ The Metropolitan Society for the Blind co-sponsored along with the Michigan Division of Services for the Blind and the Rehabilitation Institute a summer college preparatory program for blind high school students.
- ▲ A key education project was begun by the Vocational Education Department. A Metropolitan Society counselor is now consulting with industrial arts teachers in the Wayne County schools. Present plans call for expanding this service into the Detroit public schools within several months.



An MSB rehabilitation teacher (left) gives a blind housewife some suggestions in the techniques used to vacuum the floor.

Accountant's Report

CLARENCE W. LADD (1911-1988)
RESIDENT PARTNER
EDWARD B. BERNACKI (1911-1988)
J. W. BERNACKI (1911-1988)
DAVID B. BERNACKI (1911-1988)

LAWRENCE SCUDDER & CO.
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

OFFICES
AND
CORRESPONDENTS
PRINCIPAL CITIES

MEMBERS AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

400 SAND ST. BLDG.
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48208
941-5375

SUBURBAN OFFICE
12200 FIVE MILE RD. LYNDIA
937-1780

To the Board of Directors
Metropolitan Society for the Blind
1401 Ash Street
Detroit, Michigan

We have examined the Statements of Financial Position of the General and Special Funds of Metropolitan Society for the Blind as of December 31, 1967, and the related Statements of Revenue, Expenses, and Fund Balances for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, the accompanying Statements of Financial Position of the General and Special Funds present fairly the Assets, Liabilities, and Fund Balances as of December 31, 1967, and the Revenue and Expenses for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Lawrence Scudder & Co.

Detroit, Michigan
January 30, 1968

This report is issued with the understanding that any publication thereof or the use of its name in connection with any publicity shall be referred for our approval, unless the report is published in its entirety.

Metropolitan Society for the Blind

1401 Ash Street
Detroit, Michigan 48208
Phone: 832-1234



Member United
Community Services

Officers

Judge Ira G. Kaufman
President

Keith W. Evans
First Vice President

Charles R. Montgomery
Vice President

William G. Butler
Secretary

Albert J. Shuttie
Treasurer

Board of Trustees

Edward G. Bernacki
William R. Black
Thomas J. Brennan, *Attorney*
Walter B. Connolly
Reverend Raymond N. Ellis
Robert Ellis
George A. Ferris
James L. Frey, M.D.
Miss Louise C. Grace
Cyrus H. King
William R. Ludwig
John Luxon
Robert D. Mahoney
Donald R. Mandich
Charles F. McLaughlin
J. Howard McNea
Harvey M. Merker, Sc.D.
Mrs. Carol Rose
J. Philip Schaupner
Reverend Chenoweth J. Watson
Joseph E. Wellman

Members of Society

Anthony J. Barone
Joseph J. Conklin, *Attorney*
Mrs. Thomas Coulter
Edgar R. Dansby
Reverend William B. Davidson
Robert A. Dearth
Mrs. L. L. Fowler
Fred A. Huber, Jr.
Harry Hunter
Elmer D. Kapp
Dr. Edith C. Kirk
Stanley Oliver
Mrs. Richard K. Scales
Joseph N. Schaeffer, M.D.
Miss Dorothy Sikora
Robert F. Sly, M.D.
John R. Smucker
Mrs. Benjamin H. Stein
Judge Joseph A. Sullivan
Judge John B. Swainson